

UNDERHILL PLANNING COMMISSION

March 18, 2015 6:30 PM

Minutes

PC Members Present: Cynthia Seybolt (Chair), Cliff Peterson, Gerry Adams, Dave Edson, Carolyn Gregson, Pat Lamphere, Irene Linde

Staff Present: Sarah McShane

Guests Present: Peter Duval, Peter Bennett

6:34 PM: Call to order by Vice-Chair Cliff Peterson. C.Peterson explained that he would be sitting in position of Chair for the evening so that C.Seybolt could concentrate on the Town Plan public hearing and any comments received. C.Peterson explained that it was a regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning Commission, as well as the warned public hearing for the 2015 Town Plan update.

6:38 PM: C.Peterson asked for public comments. Peter Bennett commended the work of the Planning Commission and staff and stated he felt the draft 2015 Town Plan was well written.

6:40 PM: Vice Chair C.Peterson opened the public hearing for the 2015 Underhill Town Plan. Staff S.McShane provided a brief overview of the planning process, highlighted the new sections, and the sections that were significantly updated. P.Bennett asked if there were any additional CCRPC recommendations regarding the Energy Chapter. C.Peterson noted that majority of the recommendations provided by CCRPC were to cross reference different sections within the plan. Commission members and the public discussed the statutory requirements and how municipal plans are required to be consistent with the regional plan.

P.Duvall provided comments. He stated that Underhill is a forested rural town with rough terrain. He stated that the plan should be reflective of the town. He also stated that he liked how the plan repeated the importance of maintaining rural character and that it did not include any big goals.

The Commission and the public discussed renewable energy strategies and how the Public Service Board oversees much of the solar installations. P.Bennett stated that towns should have more control over the siting of renewable energy structures. Discussion of the Renewable Energy Resources map ensued. P.Duvall stated that there are some transmission constraints and that Underhill does not have good wind potential.

Commission members and the public discussed the map disclaimer, recourses to fix map errors, and their use in subdivision proposals.

P.Duvall provided the following corrections and general recommendations:

- Page 54 reference to metric tons should be corrected to metric tonnes and remove the reference to [MTCO2e];

- Page 57 remove the reference to sledding hill and replace with sliding hill, to reflect local vocabulary;
- He noted that "Right to Farm" is a state law;
- He stated that it is an incorrect assumption that total vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is increasing. He stated that total miles traveled is decreasing both nationally and regionally [Page 14, Section 1.10];
- Page 15, Climate Change section- He stated that climate change is the biggest planning challenge of all time and should be addressed with appropriate goals and strategies. He stated that climate change will impact Underhill with big increases in precipitation, and loss of winter, foliage season, and sugar season. He noted that most planning is retrospective, based on past events, and it is important to think ahead. [P.Bennett responded stating that climate change is recognized as a threat and all the town can do is to prescribe approaches not to contribute any additional greenhouse gas emissions.]
- P. Duvall further stated that either the transportation or recreation chapter should include a discussion on the old B & L rail line and potential uses since it connects to the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail. He encouraged the Planning Commission to develop a map with all of the resources worth protecting.
- He stated that the town does not have the urban infrastructure needs, i.e. sidewalks, and that informal 'goat paths' or 'short cuts' are more advantageous for pedestrians.
- He stated that Underhill has more affordable housing than other municipalities in the region and that the best thing for Underhill is to not have any more housing. He also stated that increasing density does not necessarily equate to affordability. He stated that it should be noted that in 2013 town voters opposed increasing density.

7:55 PM:

Members discussed the comments provided by CCRPC and agreed that the disclaimer should be clearly written on a cover sheet preceding the maps and the word 'DRAFT' should be repeated as the header on each map.

Members discussed the Natural Resources map. D.Edson stated his concerns with the habitat block and wildlife linkage data. C.Seybolt stated that the plan does discuss contiguous open spaces. P.Lamphere stated that the Conservation Commission would be disappointed if all of the wildlife and habitat information was removed from the map. C.Peterson made a motion, seconded by P.Lamphere, to include the revised map provided by CCRPC which eliminates the habitat blocks but includes the wildlife linkages. C.Seybolt noted that she was disappointed to see the habitat blocks removed from the map. The motion passed by all members present (8:25 PM).

Members reviewed and discussed the written comments received via letter dated March 16, 2015 from Jeffrey Moulton. Mr. Moulton requested to "*re-designate the two properties along Fuller Road shown in the diagram as hosting residential activities, consistent with their current use and the uses of surrounding properties.*" Members reviewed Map 2- Existing Land Use. C.Peterson made a motion, seconded by C.Seybolt, to include a revised legend on Map 2 Existing Land Use. The motion passed by all members present.

Members discussed the Future Land Use and Transportation maps. Members agreed to change the name of the Future Land Use map to "Potential Future Land Use."

C.Peterson will work with staff to ensure the transportation map more accurately depicts the town's roads and transportation infrastructure.

Members agreed to keep Map 7 Renewable Energy Resources within the plan.

Members agreed to include the text cross references as recommended by CCRPC.

Members agreed not to cross reference the maps as recommended by CCRPC.

C.Seybolt provided grammatical and typo corrections. Members agreed to have staff make the corrections and for C.Seybolt to review the final draft prior to submitting it to the Selectboard and filing it with the Town Clerk.

Members discussed next steps. Staff will incorporate the agreed upon changes and work with the CCRPC to make the agreed map corrections. Members agreed to include a transmittal memo with the final draft provided to the Selectboard. Staff will draft the memo for signature of the Chair.

9:05 PM: Old Business. C.Seybolt asked members to try to recruit community members that may be interested in serving on the Planning Commission. Members will develop a work plan at the April 1st meeting. Members discussed moving the meeting time to 6:00 PM. C.Peterson stated that the Rules of Procedure may need to be revised if the meeting time is permanently changed.

9:17 PM: D.Edson made a motion, seconded by P.Lamphere, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed by all members present.

Meeting adjourned at 9:17 PM

Respectfully Submitted By:

Sarah McShane

These minutes of the March 18, 2015 meeting were accepted

This 1st day of April, 2015



Cynthia Seybolt, Chair

These minutes are subject to correction by the Underhill Planning Commission. Changes, if any, will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting of the PC.

